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1970/05/07

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Department of State TELEGRAM

SECRET

O P 070505Z MAY 70
FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH
TO RUEHCR/AMEMBASSY SAIGON IMMEDIATE 382
INFO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 707
BT
S E C R E T PHNOM PENH 784

INCN: 1 4 5 4Q
MAY 7, 1970
3:00 A.M.

NODIS/KHMER

1. HAVE JUST HAD VISIT OF MANAGER SNUOL PLANTATION WHO RETURNED PHNOM PENH MAY 7.

2. MANAGER STATES THAT ALL PERSONNEL, BOTH FRENCH AND CAMBODIAN SAFE AND WELL. EXPRESSED GRATITUDE FOR ARRIVAL OF US TROOPS WHICH PERMITTED REMOVAL BY COMPANY PLANE MAY 6 AND 7.

2. SECOND PURPOSE OF MANAGER'S CALL AT EMBASSY WAS TO REQUEST THAT I SEND URGENT MESSAGE REPEATING WARNING THAT HE HAD GIVEN BOTH A COLONEL AND COMMANDING GENERAL REGARDING PRESENCE OF NVNA/VC IN AREA. HE STATES THAT HE IS CERTAIN THERE ARE AT LEAST 5 TO 7000 VC IN AREA AND WAS APPALLED AT LACK OF CONCERN BY US MILITARY. HE FELT THAT OUR TROOPS WERE BEING EXTREMELY NAIVE IN DIFFERENTIATING BETWEEN VIETNAMESE AND CAMBODIAN PEASANTS DESPITE CONCRETE IDENTIFICATION BY HIMSELF AND OTHER PLANTATION PERSONNEL OF NVNA/VC TROOPS PASSING ON BICYCLES RIGHT ALONG SIDE OF TANKS. HE SAID HE REALIZED OBJECT OF OPERATION WAS NOT DESTRUCTION OF VIETNAMESE FORCES BUT HE FEELS THAT SOMEBODY WILL GET HURT IF THEY DO NOT TAKE THIS SERIOUSLY.

3. IN COURSE OF HIS MEETING WITH GENERAL INSIDE CAMBODIA, HE ALSO MENTIONED MEETING ACCORD REPRESENTATIVE FROM III CORPS: I FAIL SEE NECESSITY OF HAVING US CIVILIAN OFFICIALS INSIDE CAMBODIA.

4. FOREGOING IS NOT PUT OUT AS SOUR GRAPES BUT BECAUSE OF WHAT I CONSIDER UNWISE AND UNNECESSARY US CIVILIAN PRESENCE. THIS IS ON TOP OF WHAT WE CONSIDER APPALLING LACK OF JUDGEMENT EVIDENCED BY MEMBER OF EMBASSY SAIGON WHO GAVE HIS CALLING CARD TO KHMER KROM MAJOR FOR PRESENTATION TO EMBASSY PHNOM PENH.

5. IT IS MY UNDERSTANDING THAT WE ARE TRYING TO KEEP OUR INVOLVEMENT DOWN TO A MINIMUM AND ACTIONS LIKE THE FOREGOING ARE BOUND TO BECOME KNOWN. THEY ARE EMBARRASSING TO THIS EMBASSY.
RIVES
BT

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED
Authority EO 12958
By CM NARA Date [illegible]